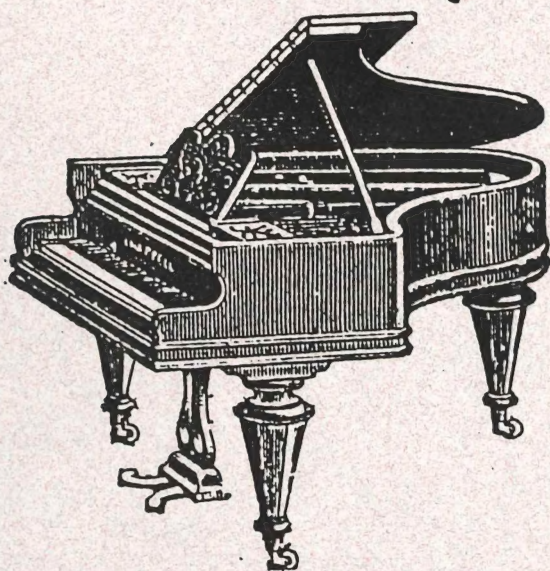


University of Toronto
Faculty of Music and the Embassy of Brazil

THURSDAY NOON SERIES

Sonia Rubinsky, piano



"one of today's top ranking Brazilian pianists"

Thursday, September 15
12:10 pm

Walter Hall
Edward Johnson Building

Program

Prole de Bebé I (Baby's Family no. 1)
Branquinha (The Porcelain Doll)
Moreninha (The Paper Doll)
Caboclinha (The Clay Doll)
Mulatinha (The Rubber Doll)
Negrinha (The Wooden Doll)
A Pobresinha (The Rag Doll)
O Polichinelo (Punch)
Bruxa (The Witch Doll)

Heitor Villa-Lobos
(1887 - 1959)

Sonata in G Major, K. 283
Allegro
Andante
Presto

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756 - 1791)

Estampes
Pagodes
Soirée dans Grenade
Jardins sous la pluie

Claude Debussy
(1862 - 1918)

Variations sérieuses, Op. 54

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809 - 1847)

Program Notes

When the principles of the modern piano were established by Bartolomeo Cristofori at the beginning of the 18th century, there was as yet no clear hint of the tremendous importance the new instrument would have in the development of music, both in its public and domestic spheres. Although the technical advantages of the instrument were immediately perceived by composers and audience alike, it was only during the 19th century that its full potential was consistently explored. Since then, it has assumed different roles in the creative process of several composers, while also serving as a vehicle for experimenting with new musical forms. The variety of styles encompassed by today's program is evidence of the wide repertory devoted to this instrument.

Prole de Bebê I (Baby's Family no. 1)

Heitor Villa-Lobos

The Brazilian Composer Heitor Villa-Lobos left an enormous repertory for the piano. Much of it consists of short pieces organized into collections, in the best tradition of the romantic *Charakterstück* perfected above all by Robert Schumann. The *Prole de Bebê* #1, composed in 1918, is an evocation of a child's fantasy world, belonging to the same class of Schumann's *Kinderszenen* and Debussy's *Children's Corner*. Each of the eight pieces of this suite represents a study in a single character as expressed by the image of a doll and its attributes. Brazilian folk melodies can be heard in many of these pieces. Indeed, the influence of the Brazilian folklore in Villa-Lobos output was so great that, when asked about this feature of his style he is reported to have said: "I am the Brazilian folklore". Overstatement aside, however, his systematic study of Brazilian folk traditions left an indelible mark in his works. He wrote a second suite on the same subject, *Prole de Bebê* #2 in 1921, where he experimented with a more abstract style.

Sonata in G Major, K. 283

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

W. A. Mozart composed a total of 18 sonatas for piano solo. Contrary to Beethoven, who turned to the piano sonata at crucial moments of his career in order to explore new possibilities, Mozart approached this genre as a means of exercising his infallible sense of form. Although he never departed from the lay-out in three movements in his piano sonatas, there is a great deal of variety in the form of individual movements, particularly in the relative proportion of their structural sections. The *Sonata K. 283* belongs to a group of six sonatas (K. 279-284) composed between December 1774 and March 1775, while Mozart was in Munich. Throughout the set, there is a clear progression from the harpsichord-oriented style of the first two sonatas to the fully developed

pianistic writing of the last sonata in D major. Mozart intended these works to be used by himself during his concerts before a new audience, and the sheer virtuosity and brilliance of much of the piano writing confirms this function.

Estampes

Claude Debussy

For Claude Debussy the piano assumed an important role in the experiments leading to the concretization of what became known as his "impressionistic" style, and a large portion of the works for piano composed in his maturity fall into this category. *Estampes* composed in 1903, is organized according to the pattern of the classical sonata in three movements, with the slow movement in the middle, a lay-out which he also used in the suite *Pour le Piano* and the two books of *Images*. *Estampes* can be seen as a microcosm of Debussy's stylistical preoccupations at the time, as each one of its pieces epitomizes a particular influence in his work: orientalism in "Pagodes"; the world of Spain in "Soirée dans Grenade"; descriptive devices in "Jardins sous la pluie". In spite of their varied source of inspiration, these three pieces are linked by the same technical procedure. In all of them the basic melodic ideas assume a variety of characters from being placed in different harmonic contexts, especially by the use of long harmonic pedals. This technique became a prominent feature of Debussy's style, and was developed to great length in his two books of *Preludes* (1910 and 1913).

Variations sérieuses, Op. 54

Felix Mendelssohn

Felix Mendelssohn belonged to the first generation of romantic composers, for whom the pianistic style derived from Beethoven was a permanent influence. The *Variations sérieuses*, Op. 54 was the last of a group of three sets of variations composed in 1841. The first two were published posthumously as Opp. 82 and 83. The *Variations sérieuses* is widely regarded as one of Mendelssohn's finest works, and it has a place alongside the great sets of variations by Beethoven and Brahms. It consists of a theme followed by seventeen continuous variations. The brilliance of the keyboard writing, which owes much to the virtuosic tradition of the 19th century, and the remarkable beauty of this piece have made it one of the cornerstones of the pianistic repertory.

... program notes by James Melo

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Sonia Rubinsky Pianist

Sonia Rubinsky is one of today's top ranking Brazilian pianists. Her burgeoning international career has taken her to four continents. Highlights of Ms. Rubinsky's guest artist appearances include performances with the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the Richmond Symphony, the Syracuse Symphony, the Phoenix Symphony as well as recitals in New York, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Paris, Tel-Aviv and Montevideo.

In addition, she has toured her country extensively, appearing with its most notable orchestras, including the Orchestra of the Teatro Municipal of Rio de Janeiro, the Campinas Symphony, the Porto Alegre Symphony, the São Paulo's Teatro Municipal. In recent seasons, Sonia Rubinsky performed concerti by Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, Prokofieff, Ravel and Gershwin.

Ms. Rubinsky recorded her first solo Compact Disc with works by Debussy, Villa-Lobos and Messiaen for Daghlia Records. She also recorded *Grand Pianola Music* by John Adams, under the composer's baton (Elektra/Nonesuch).

Sonia Rubinsky began musical studies in her native Campinas and then attended the Rubin Academy of Music in Jerusalem. She holds a doctorate from The Juilliard School. Her teachers include Olga Normanha, Benjamin Oren, Beveridge Webster, Jacob Lateiner and William Daghlia.

Upcoming Thursday Noon Concerts:

Thursday, September 22

Opera Atelier

A Lecture/Demonstration of *Dido & Aeneas*

Thursday, September 29

Music of Travel and Adventure

Introduced by Gaynor Jones

Thursday, October 13

A Lecture with Professor Emeritus John Beckwith:

The Faculty of Music after 75 Years - Part II

All concerts at 12:10 pm, Walter Hall

Admission Free

Call 978-3744 for information